

Message Text

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PAGE 01 RABAT 01412 201703Z

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ACTION NEA-09

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R 201542Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4906

INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 1412

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP PFOR MO AF

SUBJ: AFGHAN AMBASSADOR TO EGYPT ACCREDITED ALSO TO MOROCCO

1. NEW AFGHAN AMBASSADOR, ABDELWAHED KARIM, PRESENTED CREDENTIALS TO KING HASSAN MARCH 19. KARIM IS AMBASSADOR TO EGYPT AND RESIDENT IN CAIRO. HE EXPECTS ALSO TO BE ACCREDITED TO OTHER NORTH AFRICAN COUNTRIES. HE IS FORMER DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF MFA IN KABUL AND AN OLD FRIEND.

2. OVER LUNCH BEFORE CREDENTIALS PRESENTATION, KARIM TOLD ME THAT FOLLOWING AFGHAN REVOLUTION, MOROCCAN REGIME HAD BEEN LOOKED UPON IN KABUL AS REACTIONARY AND UNPOPULAR. THEREFORE, ALTHOUGH AFGHAN/MOROCCAN RELATIONS NEVER BROKEN, PREVIOUS ACCREDITATION TO MOROCCO OF AFGHAN AMBASSADOR IN PARIS WAS NOT RENEWED AND SITUATION DELIBERATELY LEFT IN LIMBO. MORE RECENTLY, HOWEVER, KING HASSAN'S IMAGE IN KABUL HAD GREATLY IMPROVED, ESPECIALLY AS RESULT OF PERFORMANCE AT RABAT SUMMIT. KABUL NOW VIEWED GOM AS SOLID AND CAPABLE OF CONSTRUCTIVE REGIONAL ROLE. KARIM FELT HASSAN HAD ALSO MADE GOOD IMPRESSION ON OTHER NON-ARAB MUSLIMS, INCLUDING
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PAGE 02 RABAT 01412 201703Z

PAKISTANIS AND INDONESIANS. KABUL HAD THUS DECIDED TO TAKE UP

DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AGAIN, BUT WITH REPRESENTATION FROM CAIRO RATHER THAN PARIS EMBASSY. DURING HIS YEAR'S AMBASSADORSHIP IN CAIRO, KARIM SAID HE HAD COME TO RECOGNIZE THAT SADAT APPRECIATES AND COUNTS ON KING'S SUPPORT.

3. GIVING VIEWS ON EGYPT, KARIM SAID HE WAS VERY FAVORABLY IMPRESSED WITH LEADERSHIP OF SADAT, ALTHOUGH HE THOUGHT SADAT'S POSITION VERY DIFFICULT. SADAT, HE REMARKED, DESPERATELY NEEDED TANGIBLE PROGRESS IN PEACE EFFORTS AND SEEMED READY TO DO ALMOST ANYTHING TO ACHIEVE IT. KARIM FELT INTERNAL EGYPTIAN OPPOSITION TO SADAT, INCLUDING IN ARMY, COULD GIVE SADAT REAL PROBLEMS. KARIM COULD NOT PIN POINT SPECIFICS, HOWEVER. HE ALSO COUNTED HIGH AMONG SADAT'S DIFFICULTIES WHAT HE CALLED EXTREMELY DISMAL ECONOMIC SITUATION. KARIM, WHO IN AFGHANISTAN WAS INVARIABLY DISCREET IN DISCUSSING SOVIET UNION, EXPRESSED OPINION THAT SADAT HAD HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO COOL OFF RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW. EGYPTIANS IN GENERAL, KARIM UNDERLINED, VISCERALLY FED UP WITH SOVIETS.

4. KARIM MENTIONED HE HAD SEEN QADHAFI A NUMBER OF TIMES AND WAS ON GOOD TERMS, AND EXPECTED TO BE GOING TO LIBYA REGULARLY AS AMBASSADOR ACCREDITED THERE. HE CHARACTERIZED QADHAFI AS BEING QUITE ABNORMAL AND GIVEN TO ABRUPT SHIFTS IN SUBJECT MATTER DURING CONVERSATIONS.
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